

Message Text

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DRAFTED BY:MLEVITSKY IO/UNP

APPROVED BY:IO/SA:EMICHAL

S/S-O:KDROBINSON

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C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 227675

EXDIS FOR MR. HELMAN

FOLLOWING REPEAT USUN NEW YORK 03474 ACTION SECSTATE INFO BEIRUT
DAMASCUS JERUSALEM TEL AVIV 06 SEP 78.

QUOTE: C O N F I D E N T I A L USUN NEW YORK 03474

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PGOV, MARR, XF, LE

SUBJECT: LEBANESE LETTER ON UNIFIL - TALKS WITH TUENI

REF: (A) STATE 225272, (B) USUN 3459

1. LEONARD MET WITH AMBASSADOR TUENI LATE AM SEPTEMBER 5
AND MADE POINTS CONTAINED PARAGRAPH 2 REFTEL A.

2. TUENI DEFENDED THE LETTER INCLUDING PARAGRAPH 7.
HE ARGUED THAT, WHILE IT MAY BE UNREALISTIC ATTEMPT
TO EXPEL ISRAELIS, THE LETTER CAN ALSO BE SEEN AS
DIRECTED TOWARD THE TAKING OF APPROPRIATE ACTION AGAINST
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PAGE 02 STATE 227675

THE PALESTINIANS WHOM THE LEBANESE FEEL MAY BE
DANGEROUSLY EMBOLDENED BY THE SUCCESS OF THE CHRISTIAN
FORCES IN HOLDING OFF UNIFIL. TUENI EVEN WISTFULLY
SUGGESTED IT COULD BE TAKEN TO MEAN THE SITUATION IN
THE NORTH.

3. AT THIS POINT IN THE CONVERSATION UN SECRETARIAT

OFFICIAL JAMES JONAH JOINED THE GROUP AND MADE A STRONG PITCH TO TUENI AS TO HOW DIFFICULT THE LETTER MADE THE RENEWAL. JONAH ARGUED THAT IT CAUSED THE SECRETARIAT GREAT DIFFICULTY IN PREPARING FOR THE RENEWAL.

4. AFTER JONAH'S DEPARTURE TUENI RAISED THE QUESTION OF THE TIMING OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL MEETING ON UNIFIL. TUENI SUGGESTED IT MIGHT BE USEFUL TO HAVE THE COUNCIL MEETING NEXT WEEK SO THAT THE ISRAELIS, WHILE STILL AT CAMP DAVID, WILL BE MADE TO UNDERSTAND HOW SERIOUS THEIR NON-COMPLIANCE WITH UNIFIL IS. LEONARD EXPRESSED THE VIEW THAT IT WOULD BE MOST UNWISE TO TAKE THE MATTER UP THAT EARLY AND AS FAR AS ISRAEL OR THE USG BEING BROUGHT TO FOCUS ON THE PROBLEM IT WOULD BE HIGHLY UNLIKELY TO ATTRACT MUCH ATTENTION FROM EITHER QUARTER WHILE CAMP DAVID IN SESSION. TUENI WAS NOT CONVINCED BUT SAID HE WOULD THINK FURTHER ON MATTER.

5. LEONARD RAISED WITH TUENI THE PROBLEM OF BISHARA (KUWAIT) WANTING TO INCLUDE A CONDEMNATION OF ISRAELI CONDUCT IN THE RESOLUTION. LEONARD LEFT NO DOUBT THAT TUENI HAD BETTER TALK BISHARA OUT OF IT IF HE WANTED A SUCCESSFUL OUTCOME OF THE COUNCIL MEETINGS ON THE UNIFIL MANDATE. TUENI TOOK THIS ON BOARD.
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PAGE 03 STATE 227675

6. COMMENT: UNFORTUNATELY LEBANESE LETTER IS NOW FACT WHICH CANNOT BE UNDONE. WE BELIEVE BEST WAY TO MINIMIZE TROUBLE FLOWING FROM IT WILL BE TO URGE URQUHART TO REPLY TO LEBANESE THAT UNIFIL IS CAPABLE OF ACHIEVING ITS OBJECTIVES WITHIN ITS PRESENT TERMS OF REFERENCE AND THAT A REDEFINITION OF THE MANDATE IS NOT WHAT'S NEEDED TO ENSURE IMPLEMENTATION OF RESOLUTIONS 425 AND 426. WE BELIEVE LEBANESE CAN BE BROUGHT TO ACCEPT THIS IN MANNER WHICH WILL TEND TO PULL THE RUG OUT FROM UNDER THOSE WHO WOULD WISH TO USE THE LEBANESE LETTER TO STIR UP TROUBLE OR COMPLICATE THE RENEWAL.
YOUNG

UNQUOTE
CHRISTOPHER

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NNN

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